

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image-forming system comprising:
an image-forming device;
a first consumable resource configured to be consumed by the
5 device in forming a printed image;
an authorization granting interface coupled to the resource and
configured based upon authorized users of the resource;
a user interface configured to receive authorization input from a
prospective user; and
10 a processor in communication with the user interface, wherein the
processor is configured to determine if a prospective user is authorized to use
the resource based upon the authorization input and interaction with the
granting interface.
2. The system of Claim 1, wherein the user interface is configured to
15 indicate to the prospective user whether the prospective user is authorized in
response to control signals generated by the processor.
3. The system of Claim 2, wherein the processor is configured to
prevent use of the resource by the prospective user when the prospective user
is not authorized and to permit use of the resource when the prospective user is
20 authorized.
4. The system of Claim 1, wherein the processor is configured to
prevent use of the resource by the prospective user when the prospective user
is not authorized and to permit use of the resource when the prospective user is
authorized.
- 25 5. The system of Claim 1 including a memory configured to receive
and store authorization input.

6. The system of Claim 1, wherein the resource includes a printing material configured to be deposited upon a medium.

7. The system of Claim 6, wherein the printing material comprises an ink.

5 8. The system of Claim 6, wherein the printing material includes a toner.

9. The system of Claim 1, wherein the resource is contained within a cartridge.

10 10. The system of Claim 9, wherein the authorization granting interface includes a digital memory coupled to the cartridge.

11. The system of Claim 1, wherein the authorization granting interface includes a digital memory coupled to the cartridge.

12. The system of Claim 1, wherein the resource comprises a print medium upon which the printed image is formed.

15 13. The system of Claim 1, wherein the user interface includes at least one of a mouse, a microphone, a keyboard and a stylus.

14. The system of Claim 1, wherein the device includes an authorization receiving interface having at least one electrically conductive contact and wherein the authorization granting interface comprises at least
20 electrically conductive contact.

15. The system of Claim 1, wherein the authorization granting interface is configured to grant and deny use of the resource.

16. The system of Claim 15, wherein the authorization granting interface is configured to grant varying levels of authorization to use of the resource.

17. The system of Claim 1, wherein the authorization granting
5 interface is configured to grant varying levels of use of the resource.

18. The system of Claim 1, wherein the processor is fixedly coupled to the device.

19. The system of Claim 1, wherein the processor is fixedly coupled to the resource.

10 20. The system of Claim 1, wherein the user interface is configured to receive authorization input from a prospective user comprising a person.

21. The system of Claim 1, wherein the user interface is configured to receive authorization input from a prospective user comprising a device.

22. A consumable resource access control unit comprising:
15 a consumable resource; and
an authorization granting interface coupled to the consumable resource and configured based upon authorized users of the resource.

23. The control unit of Claim 22 including a cartridge containing the consumable resource, wherein the authorization granting interface is coupled to
20 the cartridge.

24. The control unit of Claim 22, wherein the consumable resource comprises a printing material.

25. The control unit of Claim 24, wherein the printing material is selected from a group including toner and ink.

26. The control unit of Claim 22, wherein the consumable resource comprises a print medium.

27. The control unit of Claim 22 including a memory coupled to the consumable resource and in communication with the authorization granting interface, wherein the memory stores authorized user data.

28. The control unit of Claim 22 including a programmable medium coupled to the cartridge and providing the authorization data.

29. The control unit of Claim 22 including a code coupled to the chamber and configured to be read by an optical scanning device, the code providing the authorization data.

30. The control unit of Claim 22, wherein the authorization granting interface is configured to grant and deny use of the resource.

31. The control unit of Claim 30, wherein the authorization granting interface is configured to grant varying levels of authorization to use of the resource.

32. The control unit of Claim 18, wherein the authorization granting interface is configured to grant varying levels of use of the resource.

33. The control unit of Claim 22 including a processor.

34. An image-forming device comprising:
a printing mechanism configured to print images;
a dock configured to removably receive a cartridge containing a consumable resource for use by the device to form a product having a printed image;
a sensor configured to identify authorization data associated with the cartridge; and

a controller configured to limit use of the resource by the device based upon identified authorization data associated with the cartridge.

35. The device of Claim 34, wherein the controller is configured to prevent the use of the resource by the device based upon the identified
5 authorization data associated with the cartridge.

36. The device of Claim 34, wherein the controller is configured to permit use of a predetermined portion of the resource by the device based upon identified authorization data associated with the cartridge.

37. The device of Claim 34, wherein the dock is configured to receive
10 a cartridge containing toner and wherein the print mechanism includes a photoconductive drum.

38. The device of Claim 34, wherein the dock is configured to receive a cartridge containing a fluid and wherein the print mechanism includes a fluid dispensing printhead.

39. The device of Claim 34, wherein the dock is configured to receive
15 a cartridge containing a supply of print medium.

40. The device of Claim 34, wherein the dock is configured to receive a stack of sheets of print medium.

41. The device of Claim 34, wherein the controller is configured to
20 prevent any use of the resource by individuals not included in the authorization data.

42. The device of Claim 34 including a notification mechanism configured to notify unauthorized individuals that they are not authorized to use the resource.

43. The device of Claim 42, wherein the notification mechanism includes a visual display.

44. The device of Claim 34 including a user interface configured to receive authorization identification from a user requesting the use of the consumable resource.

45. A consumable resource for an image-forming device, the resource comprising:

means associated with the resource for identifying authorized users of the resource to the image-forming device.

46. A method for limiting use of a consumable resource for an image-forming device, the method comprising:

coupling authorization data identifying authorized users of the resource to the resource.

47. The method of Claim 46 including:

coupling the resource to the image-forming device;

sensing the authorization data; and

limiting use of the resource by the device based upon the sensed authorization data.

48. The method of Claim 47, wherein limiting use of the resource includes preventing any use of the resource by an individual not included in the authorization data.

49. The method of Claim 47 including notifying unauthorized individuals that they are not authorized to use the resource.

50. The method of Claim 47, wherein coupling authorization data to the resource includes recording the authorization data upon a memory coupled to the consumable resource.

51. The method of Claim 47, wherein coupling authorization data includes coupling an optically readable code for providing the authorization data to the consumable resource.